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ABSTRACT

Examination of college enrollment in Atlanta, Georgia, showed the starkest contrasts between White gains and Black declines of any of the five metropolitan regions studied by the University of Chicago's Metropolitan Opportunity Project: while there were no declines in enrollment for White or Hispanic students, there were substantial declines for Black students. In the four other regions studied, socioeconomic factors were the decisive influence of enrollment declines, which occurred across all ethnic groups. In Atlanta socioeconomic status is a less important factor than race. Between 1975 and 1984 White and Hispanic students comprised a decreasing proportion of high school graduates but an increasing proportion of college students. The opposite held true for Blacks. Examination of the largest schools in Atlanta revealed that the four colleges that were integrated by race had a minimum of 80 percent White enrollment. The total number of degrees awarded to Whites and Hispanics rose from 1975 to 1984, but fell for Black students after 1978. The number of degrees awarded by traditionally Black colleges in Atlanta also fell. There is no serious attempt to desegregate higher education in Georgia, in spite of the fact that Georgia is under court order to desegregate its institutions of higher education. Data are presented on 24 tables. (BJV)

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DECLINING BLACK ACCESS TO COLLEGE IN METROPOLITAN ATLANTA

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DECLINING BLACK ACCESS TO COLLEGE

Faith Paul

A pattern of declining minority access to college is emerging across America. The American Council of Education, the Census Bureau, and other major sources of data have documented this general trend. This study of metropolitan Atlanta is part of a national study of five metropolitan areas, all of which show declines. Metropolitan Atlanta, however, has the worst contrast between white gains and black declines in college-going rates for the period studied, 1975 to 1984.

Other metropolitan areas show some declines for white students as well, indicating that similar socio-economic patterns were at work for all groups of students, although the largest impact was on blacks who make up a much larger proportion of poor families. In Atlanta, however, there were no declines in college access for white or Hispanic students, only for blacks.

Unlike most studies of enrollment trends, this study examines not only how many students enrolled each year but how those enrollments compare to the changing percentages of minority and white high school graduates, and uses those numbers as a base for analyzing changes in college enrollment. This is important because the rapidly changing racial composition of the high school population means that the changing pattern of access can only be accurately understood by measuring college enrollment trends against population trends. An increase of 200 white students in higher education enrollment may represent either a proportional loss or gain for college access depending on

changes that have taken place in their number and proportional representation among high school graduates.

The data for this study came from school and college enrollment statistics obtained from the U.S. Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Education. Information on individual students was not available; therefore it was not possible to identify Atlanta area students attending college outside the area, or those who came to metro Atlanta from elsewhere. (State and local higher education institutions should obtain student-specific data and make it available to researchers so that these issues can be studied in greater depth). Other sources show that many Atlanta institutions are highly local in their enrollment. In spite of the limitations, the trends emerging from the aggregate enrollment and graduation data clearly identify broad patterns of change in access, choice, and degree attainment.

Access to College

Higher education enrollment data show that white enrollments have increased in metro Atlanta in both four year and two year colleges and in both the public and private higher education sectors between 1975 and 1984. The very small Hispanic enrollment has also expanded. Black enrollment rose in public higher education institutions and fell in the private four year schools.

Table 1 shows the number of students enrolled in public four year institutions in metro Atlanta between 1975 and 1984. White students showed the largest gains, but enrollment for all ethnic groups increased over the 9 year period. These initial

data do not take the changing high school graduate population into account. They show changes in college enrollment without considering the rising proportion of the college-eligible population that is black.

TABLE 1

Number of Students Enrolled in Public Four Year Higher Education Institutions, by Ethnicity, in Metro Atlanta, 1975-1984

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	2,501	3,037	3,410	3,520
Hispanic	110	176	240	428
White/Other	18,468	18,937	22,289	23,400
Total	20,969	21,958	25,703	27,033

*Source: HEGIS Data.

This first look at enrollment trends for black men and women appears to show gains in access to public four-year colleges over the nine years studied. Black male enrollment rose modestly, from a base of 2501 students in 1975 to 3520 in 1984, for a net gain of 26%. Black female enrollment grew substantially between 1975 and 1984, rising 48%, for an increase of 635 students.

Enrollment in the four year private institutions shows both gains and losses in enrollment.

Table 2

Number of Students Enrolled in Private Four-Year Higher Education Institutions, by Ethnicity, in Metro Atlanta, 1975-1984

	1975	1978	1980	1984

Black	6,093	6,643	7,226	6,911
Hispanic	53	81	104	125
White/Other	5,745	6,197	6,614	6,689
Total	11,891	12,921	13,944	13,725

*Source: HEGIS Data.

From 1975 to 1980, enrollment for blacks, whites and Hispanics increased steadily. By 1984, however, black enrollment had dropped, while the other groups continued to grow modestly. The enrollment of both black males and females fell in the 1980s. Black male enrollments fell by 6.6%. or 223 students, while black female enrollment dropped 2.4% for a loss of 92 students.

Because the critical issue in higher education enrollment is attainment of the bachelor's degree, enrollment in public versus private colleges is secondary to the more basic issue of overall enrollment in bachelor degree granting institutions. Table 3 looks at numbers of students enrolled in all general purpose B.A. granting institutions ,as distinguished from single function religious, technical or proprietary schools, in metro Atlanta between 1975 and 1984.

Table 3

Number of Students Enrolled in Four Year Public and Private Colleges and Universities, by Ethnicity, in Metro Atlanta, 1975-84

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	8,594	9,680	10,636	10,431
Hispanic	163	257	344	553
White/Other	24,213	25,134	28,903	30,089
Total	32,860	34,879	39,647	40,758

*Source: HEGIS Data.

Black losses in the private sector were not offset by larger gains in the public sector, and therefore overall black enrollment in four year colleges fell by 1984. The drop in black enrollment was due to losses in both black male and female enrollment. Enrollment for black males fell 4.5 per cent between 1980 and 1984, a loss of 218 students. Black female enrollment fell only 0.5 per cent, a drop of 28 students.

Over the decade, total black male enrollment grew by 17%, and female enrollment by 24%. But the losses between 1980 and 1984 point to a substantial reversal of earlier progress. The meaning of the backward turn will become much clearer in the next section of this paper when baseline high school graduation data is introduced into the analysis.

Although enrollment in two-year higher education institutions does not lead directly to a bachelor's degree, and only a small fraction of students enrolled in community college transfer programs actually transfer, it is useful to look at data on two-year college enrollments. (Table 4)

Table 4

Number of Students Enrolled in Two-Year Public Colleges, by Ethnicity, in Metro Atlanta,1975-1984

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	2,656	3,389	3,073	3,713
Hispanic	58	111	128	156
White/Other	12,722	13,999	10,810	12,109
Total	15,436	17,499	14,011	15,976

*Source: HEGIS Data.

A different pattern emerges here. Declines took place between 1978 and 1980, and white students had a larger loss of enrollment than blacks, and regained less enrollment in 1984. Black students were more dependent on enrollment in two-year colleges than were white students.

There were very different patterns of enrollment change for black men and women in the two-year colleges. Over the entire decade black male enrollment at two-year colleges fell 2.6%. Black female enrollment rose 87%.

Distribution of Enrollment Between Two-Year and Four-Year Schools. It makes a substantial difference whether enrollment grows in two-year or four-year colleges. A much smaller fraction of students who begin college in two-year institutions ever receive B.A. degrees. Table 5 shows the proportion of each ethnic group's total higher education enrollment in four-year institutions that grant B.A. degrees.

Table 5

Percent of Total Higher Education Enrollment
Metro Atlanta Enrolled in Four-year Colleges & Universities
by Race, 1975-1984

	1975	1978	1980	1984

Black	76.2	73.7	77.2	73.2
White/Other	65.6	64.2	72.8	71.3
Total	68.0	66.6	73.9	71.9

*Source: HEGIS Data.

In 1975 a larger proportion of black college students in metro Atlanta were enrolled in four year bachelor degree granting institutions than whites and Hispanics. This is a result of the influence of the traditionally black colleges. The data shows a substantial decline in the proportion of blacks enrolled in such institutions in the 1980s, falling below the level recorded in 1975. (It is still true, however, that metro Atlanta had a far higher fraction of black students in four year colleges in 1984 than was true in metropolitan Chicago, Philadelphia or Los Angeles, where historically black colleges play a much more limited role or are nonexistent.) Although there were fluctuations for white students, the overall trend was towards an increasing proportion of white students attending four-year campuses.

Enrollment and the Changing College-Age Population

The data discussed so far looks at changes in higher education enrollments without considering what was happening to the underlying base of high school graduates. This can be misleading. By examining statistics on the high school graduating classes of metropolitan Atlanta, it is possible to compare the proportional representation of black, white, and Hispanic groups in their high school graduating class, with their representation in the enrollment in the higher education institutions.

The college eligible pool can best be assessed by examining the changing base of high school graduates. The key finding from this analysis is that the proportion of blacks enrolling in most types of higher education institutions in metro Atlanta fell between 1975 and 1984, and that blacks in Atlanta are a major at-risk group. White and Hispanic enrollments, on the other hand, rose proportionally to their representation among high school graduates in all categories of colleges and universities.

Black students were an increasing proportion of the metro Atlanta high school graduates between 1980 and 1984. In 1980 they made up 30.5% of the high school graduates. In 1984 they constituted 35.0% of the high school graduates. Nevertheless, the percentage of blacks going on to college shrunk. Whites, a declining proportion of the high school graduates, enrolled in college in larger numbers.

Black students in metro Atlanta were not just falling behind white students, they were falling further and further behind the earlier college going record for blacks. They were going down the up escalator.

In 1980, black enrollment in all four-year higher education institutions in metro Atlanta, public and private, in 1980 was 4.3% below the black share of the spring 1980 high school graduating class. In 1984 the black fraction of the four-year higher education enrollment was 10.2% lower than black representation in the high school graduating class.

Table 6

Representation in High School Graduating Class
and in All Four-Year Public and Private Colleges & Universities
in Metro Atlanta, by Race, 1980 and 1984

	1980			1984		
	%H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.	%H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.
Black	30.5	26.2	-4.3%	35.0	24.8	-10.2%
White	69.5	72.9	+3.4%	65.0	73.8	+ 8.8%

*Sources: HEGIS Data and Georgia Department of Education.
Hispanic enrollment is excluded because of its small size.

Black higher education enrollment fell almost 6% relative to the increasing base of black high school graduates, between 1980 and 1984, while white enrollment rose over 5 percent compared to the declining base of white high school graduates. A larger proportion of a declining white college age population was going on to college.

Table 7 and 8 look at what happened in the public and pivate four-year colleges and universities respectively.

Table 7

Representation in High School Graduating Class and
in Four-Year Public College and Universities in Metro Atlanta
by Race, 1980 and 1984

	1980			1984		
	%H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.	%H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.
Black	30.5	12.3	-19.2%	35.0	11.9	-23.1%
White	69.5	86.7	+17.2%	65.0	86.6	+12.6%

*Sources: HEGIS Data and Georgia Department of Education.
**Hispanic enrollment is excluded because of its small size.

Black enrollment in public four-year colleges which was already 19 per cent below the proportion of black high school graduates in 1980 fell an additional 4 per cent by 1984. This is not only a problem for young blacks but also for the public colleges and universities, which operate under federal and state civil rights requirements to serve all of the people of the state. The public system in Georgia has failed to meet its federal desegregation goals. The trend suggests that the pattern is becoming worse.

Table 8 looks at enrollment patterns at the four-year private institutions compared to high school graduation patterns.

Table 8

Representation in High School Graduating Class and in Four Year Private Higher Education Institutions in Metro Atlanta, by Race, 1980 and 1984

	1980			1984		
	%H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.	%H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.
Black	30.5	51.8	+21.3%	35.0	50.4	+15.3%
White	69.5	47.4	-22.1%	65.0	48.7	-16.3%

*Sources: HEGIS Data and Georgia Department of Education.
**Hispanic enrollment is excluded because of its small size.

The much higher representation of blacks students in private

four-year colleges in metro Atlanta is due to the presence of several historically black colleges. These colleges, however, draw a substantial share of their enrollment from other states and countries. These black colleges had a large enrollment decline in the 1980s, substantially reducing the region's overall black enrollment in four-year colleges. The institutions that had so long been the key to college access for blacks now were the center of the decline.

Even the historical importance of the five black colleges in metro Atlanta could not offset the larger forces acting to limit access to higher education. This raises important questions about the role of the predominantly black colleges in metro Atlanta and elsewhere, which has yet to be addressed in systematic research.

Comparing Atlanta and the other metro regions in terms of black representation among the college enrollees shows particularly severe problems in the Atlanta area.(Table 9)

Table 9

Difference Between Percent of High School Graduates and Percent of Total Four Year College Enrollment for Blacks in Five Metropolitan Regions, 1980-84

	1980			1984		
	% H.S.	% Col.	Dif.	% H.S.	% Col	Dif.
Atlanta	30.5	26.2	- 4.3	35.0	24.8	-10.2
Chicago	17.4	16.6	- 0.8	19.7	16.2	- 3.5
Houston						
Los Angeles	12.3	8.1	- 4.2	11.2	6.8	- 4.4
Philadelphia	22.1	N/A	N/A	19.3	N/A	N/A

In each of the metro regions the gap between percent of black high school graduates or twelfth graders, and percent of blacks in the metro college enrollment widened between 1980 and 1984, but it widened the most in Atlanta. Because this is the most accurate measure of what is actually happening to high school graduates, this trend is extremely important.

Losses were greater for Atlanta black students in both the public and private higher education sector. An examination of public four year enrollment with changes in the high school base included is shown in Tables 10 and 11.

Table 10

Percent of Black High School Graduates and Percent of Black Enrollment in Public Four Year Institutions in four Metropolitan Regions in 1980 and 1984

	1980			1984		
	% H.S.	% Col.	Dif.	% H.S.	% Col	Dif.
Atlanta	30.5	12.3	-18.2	35.0	11.9	-23.1
Chicago	17.4	25.4	+ 8.0	19.7	25.6	+ 5.9
Los Angeles	12.3	8.8	- 3.5	11.2	7.2	- 4.0
Philadelphia	22.1	N/A	N/A	19.3	N/A	N/A

Although the gap between percent of blacks graduating from high school and enrolling in public four year institutions grew

in each of the regions the deterioration was greatest in Atlanta.

The pattern in four-year private higher education institutions in the five metropolitan regions is shown in Table 18. Here again Atlanta had the largest increase in difference between black high school graduates and blacks going on to private four-year higher education. It is important to remember that the larger concentration of Atlanta area black students in four year colleges is due to the presence of the historically black four-year institutions, much of whose enrollment is from outside the region. The trend in the 1980s is clearly negative.

Table 11

Difference Between Percent of High School Graduates and Percent of Black Enrollment in Private Four Year Higher Education Institutions in Four Metropolitan Areas in 1980 and 1984

	1980			1984		
	% H.S.	% Col.	Dif.	% H.S.	% Col	Dif.
Atlanta	30.5	51.8	+21.3	35.0	50.4	+15.3
Chicago	17.4	12.2	- 5.2	19.7	11.7	- 8.0
Los Angeles	12.3	6.1	- 6.2	11.2	6.0	- 5.2
Philadelphia	22.1	N/A	N/A	19.3	N/A	N/A

Two-Year College Enrollment Patterns

Compared with High School Graduate Base

Enrollment in the two-year colleges in metro Atlanta followed the pattern for four-year public institutions. Black enrollments in 1984 were not only proportionately lower than white enrollments, but they fell seriously behind the level of black enrollment in 1980. Table 12 presents the relevant data.

Table 12

Representation in High School Graduating Class and in Two-Year Public Colleges in Metro Atlanta, by Race, 1980-1984

	1980			1984		
	% H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.	% H.S. Grads.	% College Enrollees	Differ.
Black	30.5	21.9	- 8.6	35.0	23.2	-11.8
White	69.5	77.2	+ 7.7	65.0	75.8	+10.8

*Sources: HEGIS Data and Georgia Department of Education.
**Hispanic enrollment is excluded because of its small size.

Choice of Colleges

Another way of looking at access to higher education is to look at the colleges and universities most frequently attended by each ethnic group to see if there is a random distribution of students, or if there are differences by type of institution, and admissions policies.

In the eight colleges where they were enrolled in the greatest numbers, black and white students in metro Atlanta attended four schools in common, but the remainder are completely different. There was virtually no difference between the schools attended by black males and females if Morehouse and Spelman are considered equivalents. Nor was there any difference between the schools attended in the largest numbers by white men and women.

There were large racial differences.

Table 13 shows the colleges and universities attended in the largest numbers by black and white students in metro Atlanta between 1975 and 1984. Georgia State University and DeKalb Community College are the most important institutions both groups share in common.

Table 13

Colleges and Universities Attended in the Largest Numbers by Black and White Students in Metro Atlanta, 1975-84

Black	White
Morehouse/Spelman	Georgia Institute of Tech.
Georgia State University	Georgia State University
Morris Brown College	Southern Tech
DeKalb Community College	DeKalb Community College
Atlanta Junior College	Emory University
Clark College	Clayton Community College
Georgia Institute of Tech.	Kennesaw C.C./College
Southern Tech.	Mercer Univ./Atlanta

*Source: HEGIS Data

When these schools are analyzed for level of admissions requirements as identified in Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, there are similarities as well as differences for black and white students. Table 14 presents this information.

Table 14

Colleges and Universities Most Frequently Attended in Metro Atlanta by Ethnicity and Admissions Requirements

Black	White

Highly Competitive	1	2
Competitive	3	2
Less Competitive	2	2
Non Competitive	2	2

*Source: HEGIS Data and Barron's Profiles of American Colleges

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Noncompetive colleges with easy admissions requirements made up half the colleges most frequently attended for both black and white students. The primary difference was that two of the schools most often attended by white students had highly competitive admissions., while black students attended only one highly competitive school in large numbers.

The schools most frequently attended by blacks and whites were highly segregated by race. Table 15 identifies the six colleges most frequently attended by black males in 1975 and 1984 and shows the percentage of the male enrollment that was black at those institutions.

Table 15

Six Colleges Attended in the Largest Numbers by Black Males in Metro Atlanta in 1975 and 1984
with Racial Enrollment that is Black

1975		1984	
Morehouse	98.3	Morehouse	96.1
Clark	95.9	Morris Brown	96.1
Morris Brown	94.9	Clark	90.6
Atlanta J.C.	92.0	Atlanta J.C.	79.7
DeKalb C.C.	15.3	DeKalb C.C.	15.9
Georgia State	12.6	Georgia State	14.6

*Source: HEGIS Data

Clearly, black male students in metropolitan Atlanta attended highly segregated institutions in 1975 and in 1984, in spite of the fact that the state of Georgia was and is under court order to desegregate its higher education institutions.

The same pattern holds for black female students and white male and female students. Table 16 shows the data for black females.

Table 16

Six Colleges Attended in Largest Number by Black Females in Metro Atlanta in 1975 and 1984, with Percent of Female Enrollment that is Black

	1975		1984	
1.	Clark	99.6	Morris Brown	99.3
2.	Morris Brown	98.1	Spelman	97.7
3.	Spelman	97.7	Clark	97.3
4.	Atlanta J.C.	94.2	Atlanta J.C.	94.6
5.	DeKalb C.C.	18.8	Georgia State	23.6
6.	Georgia State	18.1	DeKalb	23.6

*Source: HEGIS Data

There was no change in the racial enrollment at Spelman for females. At Morris Brown and Atlanta J.C. the extent of Black female segregation increased. Only at DeKalb and Georgia State was there greater integration, for black females, though the gains were small.

The picture is similar for white males and females. Table 17 presents the data for white males.

Table 17

Six Colleges Attended in Largest Number by White Males in Metro Atlanta in 1975 and 1984, with Percent of Male Enrollment that is White

1975		1984	
Kennesaw J.C.	98.8	Kennesaw College	96.4
Emory University	97.8	Emory University	94.7
Clayton J.C.	97.0	Clayton C.C.	93.1
Oglethorpe	95.9	Southern Tech	91.6
Georgia Tech	95.3	Oglethorpe	90.2
Southern Tech	93.6	Georgia State	83.9

Source: HEGIS Data

In only one instance, at Georgia State in 1984 did the extent of white male enrollment drop below 90%. This is segregation in the extreme.

Table 18

Six Colleges Attended In Largest Numbers by White Females in Metro Atlanta in 1975 and 1984, With Percent of Female Enrollment that is White

1975		1984	
Kennesaw J.C.	98.6	Kennesaw College	96.8
Clayton J.C.	96.3	Agnes Scott	92.1
Emory University	95.3	Emory University	91.2
Oglethorpe	95.1	Clayton J.C.	89.8
Agnes Scott	94.4	Mercer	88.7
Mercer	94.4	Oglethorpe	87.4

*Source: HEGIS Data

There was a little less segregation for white females reflecting the stronger movement of black females into higher education during this period as documented above. The extent of segregation for white females remained quite high however (Table 18).

These data show no strong effort to desegregate higher education in Georgia, in spite of the fact that Georgia is under court order to do so. What they indicate, instead, is a perpetuation of separateness, setting metro Atlanta apart in this study of five metropolitan regions as having an extremely segregated higher education system.

Degree Attainment in Metro Atlanta

The total number of bachelor's degrees awarded by public and private higher education institutions in metro Atlanta rose steadily for Hispanics and whites between 1975 and 1984. But it fell for blacks after 1978 (Table 19).

Table 19

Total Number of Bachelor Degrees Awarded by Public and Private Colleges and Universities in Metro Atlanta, by Ethnicity, 1975-84

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	975	1,257	1,144	1,102
Hispanic	17	42	57	73
White/Other	4,109	4,191	5,076	5,411

*Source: HEGIS Data

The declines in black bachelor degree attainment after 1978 were not due to declines in degree attainment in the public

colleges and universities, but rather to declines in degree attainment at the private schools which were predominantly black. Table 20 shows the data on degree attainment in the public institutions and Table 20 the pattern of degree attainment at the private schools.

Table 20

Number of Bachelor Degrees Award by Public Higher Education Institutions in Metro Atlanta, by Ethnicity, 1975-1984

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	179	263	255	305
Hispanic	9	26	41	47
White/Other	2,905	3,031	3,627	3,821

*Source: HEGIS Data

There was a steady increase in the number of bachelor degrees awarded to all groups, with the exception of the small dip for blacks in 1980. On the whole, however, the trend was towards modest but regular growth in the number of degrees granted.

At the private schools changes were smaller, and involved a plateau or some declines for all groups, though the decline in black degree attainment was the largest.

Table 21

Number of Bachelor Degrees Awarded by Private Schools in Metro Atlanta, by Ethnicity, 1975-1984

	1975	1978	1980	1984	1975-84 Change

Black	796	994	889	797	+ .1%
Hispanic	8	16	16	26	+225.0%
White/Other	1,204	1,160	14497	1,590	+ 32.19%

*Source: HEGIS Data

Though white degree attainment dropped briefly in 1978 in the private schools, and Hispanic degree attainment remained constant in 1978 and 1980, black degree attainment dropped significantly in 1980 and again in 1984. This is most surprising for it reflects major declines in degree attainment at predominantly black institutions.

While number of B.A. degrees granted is an important measure of progress, there is another that is equally significant, and that is percent of degree attainment in relationship to percent of enrollment. If, for instance, black students made up 11.4 per cent of the enrollment in 1975, but received only 5.8 per cent of the B.A. degrees, the difference between percent of enrollment and percent of degrees received would raise serious questions. If a negative number is involved, that means that percent of degrees received is smaller than the group's percentage in the enrollment. If it is a positive figure, that means that a group is receiving more bachelor degrees than would be expected from their representation in the college enrollment.

Table 22 looks at the difference between percent of degree attainment and percent of enrollment for each ethnic group in the public colleges and universities in metro Atlanta.

Table 22

Difference Between Percent of Degree Attainment and Percent of Enrollment in Metro Atlanta, by Race, 1975-1984

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	-5.6	-5.1	-5.8	-4.6
White/Other	+5.8	+5.1	+5.8	+5.0

*Source: HEGIS Data

Table 23 looks at difference between percent of degree attainment and percent of enrollment at the private colleges and universities.

Table 23

Difference Between Percent of Degree Attainment and Percent of Enrollment at Private Colleges in Metro Atlanta, by Race

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	-11.6	-5.6	-14.0	-17.4
White/Other	+11.7	+5.5	+14.2	+17.2

*Source: HEGIS Data

When bachelor degree attainment at the public and private colleges is combined, losses at the private institutions outweigh gains in the public institutions for blacks. White students, on the other hand, continued to receive bachelor degrees significantly beyond what would be expected from their proportion in the enrollment. Table 24 shows these patterns.

Table 24

Difference Between Percent of Degree Attainment and Percent of Enrollment in All Bachelor Degree Institutions by Race

	1975	1978	1980	1984
Black	-6.7	-4.3	-8.0	-8.1
White/Other	+6.9	+4.2	+8.0	+8.4

*Source: HEGIS Data

Summary and Conclusions

College enrollments in metro Atlanta show the starkest contrasts between white gains and black declines of any of the five metropolitan regions studied by the University of Chicago's Metropolitan Opportunity Project. There were no declines in enrollment for white or Hispanic students. There were substantial declines for black students. In the four other metro areas studied there were declines in all ethnic groups with socio-economic factors as the decisive influence. in Atlanta socio-economic status appears to be less important than race.

White and Hispanic students were a decreasing proportion of the high school graduates in metro Atlanta between 1975 and 1984. But they were an increasing proportion of the college enrollment. Black students, who were an increasing proportion of the high school graduates, were on the other hand, a decreasing proportion of the campus population. Black students were not just falling behind white students but also falling behind previous levels of black college attendance.

In comparison with other metropolitan regions the negative difference between black representation among the high school graduates and undergraduate college enrollment, grew wider between 1980 and 1984 in Atlanta than in the other areas. The differences were substantial between Atlanta and the other areas, indicating a closer alignment between race and the other factors affecting higher education enrollment.

When choice of schools was examined by race there were four integrated colleges and four that were clearly separated by race in the schools attended in the largest numbers. The integrated colleges had a minimum of 80% white enrollment. A high degree of segregation was found in the higher education institutions attended in the largest numbers by blacks and white students, in most instances exceeding ninety percent of one race. These data show no serious effort to desegregate higher education in Georgia, in spite of the fact that the state of Georgia is under court order to desegregate its higher education institutions.

The total number of bachelor degrees awarded by public and private colleges in metro Atlanta rose steadily for Hispanic and white students between 1975 and 1984, but it fell for black students after 1978 because of declines in degree attainment at private, rather than public four-year institutions. The decline in degrees awarded in traditionally black colleges was particularly important. The same pattern emerges when degree attainment is viewed as a percent of enrollment for each ethnic group.

The progress of white and Hispanic students in enrollment, choice, and degree attainment in metro Atlanta is important, and evidence of good work at both the pre-college and college levels. The decreasing enrollment and degree attainment of black students in metro Atlanta is also significant, and cannot be ignored. It is a personal tragedy for the students involved, and a social tragedy for the metro region and the state, for it deprives them

of human talent and leadership needed for economic, social, and political growth.

Nothing is more central to the dream of contemporary American families than that their children will be able to go to college and obtain the degree that opens the road to most of the interesting and well-paying jobs in the American economy. The families we interviewed reflected the widespread hope of inner city families that somehow their children will obtain the education that will enable them to do what their parents could not -- to escape a life on the margins of American society and to move themselves and their children right into the mainstream. Metropolitan Atlanta has claimed a leadership role in the economic and social development of a new South freed from the divisions and the human waste of the segregation system.

The enormous gains in access to college for Atlanta area blacks from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s gave substance to one of the most important of these hopes. The college trends in this decade are a clear and present danger to those claims.